

December 10, 2003

**MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES**

**FROM: KAY COLES JAMES**  
**Director**

**SUBJECT: Excused Absence for Federal Employees on**  
**December 26, 2003**

The President has issued an Executive order excusing Executive branch non-Postal Service employees from duty on Friday, December 26, 2003, except those who, in the judgment of the head of the agency, cannot be excused for reasons of national security, defense, or other public need. For pay and leave purposes, December 26, 2003, will be treated as falling within the scope of statutes and Executive orders governing holidays for Federal employees.

Most employees who are excused from duty on December 26th will receive the basic pay they would have received if no Executive order had been issued. An employee who was previously scheduled to take annual leave on December 26th will not be charged annual leave (or any other form of paid leave, compensatory time off, or credit hours). (This policy does not apply to employees who receive annual premium pay for standby duty under 5 U.S.C. 5545(c)(1) or to firefighters who are covered by the special pay provisions of 5 U.S.C. 5545b.) An employee who is required to work nonovertime hours on December 26th is entitled to holiday premium pay under 5 U.S.C. 5546(b).

For general pay and leave administration instructions, please refer to our fact sheets on:

- Federal holidays at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/worksch/HTML/HOLIDAY.HTM>,
- compressed work schedules at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/worksch/HTML/AWSchws.htm>, and
- flexible work schedules at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/worksch/HTML/awsfws.htm>.

Employees of the U.S. Postal Service and contract employees should contact their supervisors (or contract officers) to obtain information on their pay and leave entitlements for December 26th.

Attachment: Executive Order

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

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For Immediate Release

December 9, 2003

EXECUTIVE ORDER

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CLOSING OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES  
OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ON FRIDAY,  
DECEMBER 26, 2003

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. All executive branch departments and agencies of the Federal Government shall be closed and their employees excused from duty on Friday, December 26, 2003, the day after Christmas Day, except as provided in section 2 below.

Sec . 2. The heads of executive branch departments and agencies may determine that certain offices and installations of their organizations, or parts thereof, must remain open and that certain employees must report for duty on December 26, 2003, for reasons of national security or defense or other public need.

Sec . 3. Friday, December 26, 2003, shall be considered as falling within the scope of Executive Order 11582 of February 11, 1971 , and of 5 U.S.C. 5546 and 6103(b) and other similar statutes insofar as they relate to the pay and leave of employees of the United States .

GEORGE W. BUSH

THE WHITE HOUSE,  
December 9, 2003.